



General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/157
S/1995/277
10 April 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fiftieth session
Item 26 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 7 April 1995 from the Permanent Representative of
Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose the statement issued by the Government of the Republic of Burundi concerning the so-called massacres that were allegedly committed by the army of Burundi in the commune of Gasorwe in Muyinga province (in north-eastern Burundi).

I should be grateful if you would arrange for this letter to be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 26 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tharcisse NTAKIBIRORA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

* A/50/50.

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Press release issued on 4 April 1995

The Ministry of Defence has learned with surprise of reports carried by the BBC on 4 April 1995 concerning so-called massacres committed by the army in the commune of Gasorwe in Muyinga province. These revelations have reportedly been confirmed by the Ambassador of the United States, Mr. Robert Krueger, according to the news agencies.

The fact of the matter is that Burundi is at war with the Intagoheka armed gangs allied with PALIPEHETU, which are openly supported by the Interahamwe militias and members of the former Rwandan armed forces.

Since the beginning of March 1995, the army has been engaged in efforts to track down and neutralize these warmongers in Muyinga province. Between 20 and 28 March 1995, a gang of assailants withdrew to safety in the commune of Gashoho. Pursued by the forces of law and order, elements of the Intagoheka militias claiming to be followers of Mr. Léonard Nyangoma decided to take the inhabitants hostage and use them as a human shield.

It should be remembered that these gangs of murderers are in the habit of wearing clothing that resembles some army uniforms. In addition, they are equipped with military firearms and sidearms.

The Ministry of Defence draws attention to the harmful consequences of rash statements and peremptory accusations which would discredit our army instead of condemning the real aggressor which is bent on waging a war against the people of Burundi.

With a view to ensuring absolute respect for humanitarian norms and behaviour in the operations of the army personnel, the establishment of a fact-finding commission has been ordered to investigate the case of Gasorwe. The commission is to submit its report before the end of the week. In the meantime those who are adding fuel to the fire and dream of becoming eyewitnesses to the apocalypse must know that they do not serve the interests of the people of Burundi.
